

devoted to anæsthetics, and there can be little doubt that much more material would have been forthcoming but for the uncertainty which prevailed as to the particular section in which each individual paper was to be read, for the papers, demonstrations and discussions on the subject were distributed over seven sittings of five different sections. I need hardly add perhaps that by establishing a separate section or subsection for anæsthetics some of the pressure upon the other sections would be relieved.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

J. FREDK. W. SILK,  
Assistant Anæsthetist to Guy's Hospital, Anæsthetist  
to the Dental School, &c.

Weymouth-street, W., July 19th, 1892.

## "A MANUAL OF CHEMISTRY, INORGANIC AND ORGANIC, FOR THE USE OF STUDENTS OF MEDICINE."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I should not ordinarily contemplate replying to the criticisms contained in your pages of a work emanating from my pen, but in the review of my "Manual of Chemistry" in your last issue there is at least one statement both misleading and inaccurate, which, with your permission, I will briefly explain. I do not propose to touch upon the debatable points, concerning which differences of opinion exist among chemists, and in connexion with which I believe I am in accord with the majority of chemists, notwithstanding the dogmatism of your reviewer. What I wish to refer to is a mere matter of fact, about which there can be no question of controversy whatever, and for the expression of which I request, in simple justice, as much publicity as you have given to the notice in question. Your reviewer in part bases his idea that the book requires more careful revision and the exercise of greater care with the proof sheets upon his supposed discovery of three typographical errors in a book of 525 pages. He states that "Nitric acid, for example, is represented on page 117 as  $\text{OHNO}_3$ ." I know not whether this statement is due to careless reading, failing eyesight, or deficiency of chemical knowledge on the part of your reviewer, but a reference to the page in question will convince the merest tyro in chemistry that 20 molecules of  $\text{HNO}_3$  are indicated and that your reviewer has attached the cipher of the 20 to the  $\text{HNO}_3$ .

I do not dwell upon the question as to whether a review of a book should be exclusively directed to the dragging in of polemical matters and to the exposure of small printer's errors; such must be left to the taste of the reviewer, but I do think that a statement that a book "cannot be safely recommended until it is freed from the flaws to which we have made reference" should be based upon something more substantial than an error of eyesight or of comprehension on the part of a reviewer.

I am, Sirs, yours very truly,

Weymouth-street, W., July 18th, 1892. ARTHUR P. LUFF.

\* \* A reference to the review will show that our criticisms were not in the main based upon the single typographical error, which is practically the only point to which Dr. Luff replies. The mistake may be an obvious one, even perhaps to the "merest tyro." Twenty molecules of  $\text{HNO}_3$  may be indicated, but as a matter of fact they are not represented. The "cypher" in front of the formula alluded to is not the figure 0, but the letter O. Our "dogmatisms" are the "dogmatisms" of Victor Meyer, Ostwald and other eminent chemists.—ED. L.

## DISPOSAL OF REFUSE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Will you kindly allow me a little space to call the attention of my professional brethren to a subject which, I venture to think, is of great importance at this season of the year, especially as it is not impossible that we may have cholera in our midst before long? I refer to the disposal of the refuse taken by the parish authorities from our dustbins. The following extract from the report of the case of Allhusen v. Vigers, before Mr. Justice Chitty, in the *Daily Chronicle* of July 18th will give one an idea of the danger which is allowed to go on unchecked in our midst:—

The plaintiff, who is the owner and occupier of Twyford Abbey, Ealing, brought his action against the defendant, a contractor, for the

removal of town refuse, in respect of an alleged nuisance caused by deposit of this refuse about 400 yards from the abbey. Prior to the trial of the action he applied for an interim injunction to restrain the nuisance, which he contended was of such a character as to interfere with the comfort and enjoyment of his house and grounds. The defendant conveys the refuse he contracts for by barges on the Grand Junction Canal to the site in question, where it is deposited to the extent of 300 yards in length, thirty-five in width, and twenty-five in depth. The smell from this heap was said to be very bad, and in certain directions of the wind was conveyed as far as the plaintiff's premises.

Can someone not suggest or invent a method of disposing of such refuse, so that it shall not remain a pestiferous heap of decaying animal and vegetable matter? Mr. Justice Chitty kindly allowed defendants three weeks to find means to prevent the nuisance, at the same time suggesting that there was no method known at present.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

GEO. HERSCHELL, M.D. Lond.

West-st., Finsbury-circus, E.C., July 18th, 1892.

## THE TRANSFORMATION OF SMALL-POX INTO COW-POX.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have been much interested in reading Dr. Hime's account of his supposed transformation of small-pox into cow-pox and only wish his experiments could set at rest the question of identity of variola and vaccinia. He has done what has been already accomplished by others and it has been pretty clearly shown that such supposed transformation has not been effected. I am still sceptical of the reality of such change, but am nevertheless quite open to conviction if Dr. Hime will afford further proof of the identity in origin of small-pox and cow-pox by transforming the latter into the former. This should be easily done if there is only one virus acting in the production of both. And what about sheep-pox, which in its clinical features and morbid anatomy so closely resembles human variola? The question of identity will not be solved until cow-pox can be converted into small-pox, which has not yet been done, and I am doubtful whether it will ever be achieved.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

GEORGE FLEMING.

London, July 20th, 1892.

## THE HUNTERIAN LECTURES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have just read with the utmost surprise certain remarks in Mr. Robinson's lecture on villous growths of the breast, in which he says that in my paper on this subject<sup>1</sup> I have grouped together the cases of duct papilloma and villous cancer as growths of a perfectly innocent nature. By what subtle alchemy the candid lecturer has deduced this perverse conclusion from my paper passes my comprehension. In order to rescue this little known group of diseases from the obscurity that had hitherto involved them I laid it down as a fundamental axiom (p. 858) that under the term "villous cancer," as commonly employed, two perfectly distinct kinds of neoplasm were included—viz., the non-malignant villous papilloma and the malignant tubular cancer. I fully set forth and contrasted the salient pathological and clinical features of each of these groups; so that it seemed to me impossible for anyone to mistake them in the future. This fundamental distinction, dimly foreshadowed in the varied nomenclature of previous observers, had never before been definitely set forth. Mr. Robinson now adopts it as his own conclusion, together with the rest of my work, and coolly asserts that I never made the distinction. The result is that this part of his lecture is merely a parrot-like repetition of my paper—published several months previously—which he has had the audacity to appropriate and pervert, but not the grace to acknowledge.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Preston, July 14th, 1892. W. ROGER WILLIAMS, F.R.C.S.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES IN GARRISON TOWNS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Having taken a great interest in the above for some years I read with satisfaction that the matter is being taken up. It is now high time that something was

<sup>1</sup> THE LANCET, April 16th, 1892.